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ABSTRACT

This report describes the June 2000 White House Strategy Session on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement, which focused on developing effective strategies aligned with broad national education goals. The report outlines the challenges that the U.S. faces in increasing Hispanic student achievement, and it shares the many recommendations made by session participants. The report focuses on academic achievement gaps leading to economic gaps; ongoing efforts to address the achievement gap; and challenges the nation faces in: increasing access to quality early childhood education; ensuring that Hispanic students achieve English proficiency; eliminating the achievement gap on state assessments; increasing the high school completion rate; and doubling the percentage of Hispanic Americans earning college degrees. The report presents strategies for reaching each of the goals, then looks at next steps related to accountability, internship programs, outreach campaigns, and capacity building and innovation. It describes a series of public-private partnerships designed to implement some of the strategies. (SM)

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Improving Hispanic Student Achievement

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Report on

the White House Strategy Session

on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December, 2000

As part of my Administration's ongoing commitment to educational excellence for all children, I was proud to host the White House Strategy Session on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement. I am pleased to report that the Strategy Session was a resounding success – in no small measure because of the energy and genuine commitment brought to the table by the participants and the many individuals and organizations that helped prepare for the Strategy Session. In particular, I would like to thank the members of my Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans for their leadership and counsel on this critical issue.

Improving education for all children and ensuring the success of Hispanic students is a top priority of the Clinton-Gore Administration. Great progress has been made over the past seven years, but we still have a long way to go. The Strategy Session provided a unique opportunity for experts, advocates, and community members from across the country to come together to discuss the many opportunities for improving the education we provide our Hispanic students. In addition to five national goals that were announced to help close the achievement gap, this group enumerated key strategies that we need to undertake as a nation over the next decade to help all students reach high standards. Just as the achievement of our fastest-growing population is a concern to be shared by the whole country, taking steps to support their achievement will also benefit all our children. The Strategy Session can serve as a model and foundation for continued work to ensure that the achievement gap between Hispanic students and their peers is closed.

With your continued help and support, I am confident that we will meet the challenges we have set for ourselves by 2010, so that we can ensure the success of all of America's children.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the education of the children of this nation.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

PREFACE

On June 15, 2000, President Clinton hosted the White House Strategy Session on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement. The Strategy Session, another step in the Administration's continued commitment to ensure that Hispanic students and their peers reach high academic standards, focused on developing effective strategies aligned to broad national goals.

Prior to the Strategy Session, White House staff conducted numerous meetings to identify measurable goals to increase Hispanic educational attainment with the help of advocacy groups and other nonprofits, educators, the private sector, Members of Congress and their staff, the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, and other leaders in the community. These meetings produced a wealth of ideas and insight regarding how best to devise realistic, measurable goals for reducing the current Hispanic educational achievement gap. As a result of this process, five national goals for increasing Hispanic student achievement were formulated and announced at the White House Strategy Session. The goals include providing access to quality early childhood education, ensuring English proficiency, closing the achievement gap on assessments of academic performance, increasing the rate of high school completion, and doubling the rate of postsecondary degree attainment.

This report is intended to outline the challenges the nation faces in increasing Hispanic student achievement and to share the many recommendations made by Strategy Session participants as a means of galvanizing action by stakeholders at all levels and in all sectors. While this report presents the national goals announced by President Clinton for increasing Hispanic student achievement, it is not meant to represent the Administration's policy positions or priorities or to offer a comprehensive strategy for improving the educational attainment of Hispanic Americans. Rather, it is an attempt to capture the results of both the process leading up to, as well as the events that transpired at, the Strategy Session. As a vehicle designed to share the discussions among advocates, experts and practitioners, this Report includes numerous suggestions, comments and ideas from various participants in this comprehensive process, but it is not an exhaustive list of possibilities or issues. Ideally it will serve as a road map for policymakers and educators who are interested in taking steps to close the educational achievement gap between Hispanic students and their peers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the June 15th, 2000 White House Strategy Session on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement President Clinton announced five goals to increase the educational attainment of Hispanics by addressing access to early childhood education, language acquisition, closing the achievement gap, and increasing high school and postsecondary completion. The Strategy Session provided a forum for an exchange of ideas among educators, federal and state policymakers, community leaders, and other interested representatives from the public, private and non-profit sectors. Participants convened to act in partnership on their common concern for the narrowing yet persistent gaps in educational achievement of the nation's fastest-growing population group.

The Strategy Session built upon the Clinton-Gore Administration's longtime commitment to ending the era of low expectations and achievement gaps faced by Hispanic students. Starting with the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act and Goals 2000, the President and Vice President have insisted that states set high standards for all students, invested in what works to improve student achievement and insisted on accountability for results. Also in 1994, President Clinton signed an Executive Order establishing the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, and in 1996 the Commission released its first comprehensive report, Our Nation on the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education. With the support and leadership of many advocates, the Department of Education formed the Hispanic Dropout Project, which culminated with the release of their report, "No More Excuses," in 1998. These reports served as a foundation for the Hispanic Education Action Plan (HEAP), through which targeted funds for Hispanic educational initiatives have been expanded. In the fall of 1999, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton hosted a White House Convening on Hispanic Children and Youth, engaging over 200 community leaders and foundation and private sector representatives in a discussion on programs that promote success for Latino youngsters.

THERE IS PROGRESS IN HISPANIC STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Over the past eight years, achievement gaps between Hispanic students and their peers have narrowed. For example, Hispanic students have made gains in reading and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress since 1992, the percentage of Hispanic high school graduates completing a core curriculum has increased by 33 percent, and five times as many Hispanic students are taking Advanced Placement exams.

HOWEVER GAPS REMAIN FROM PRE-SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY

Despite the progress that has been made in narrowing some achievement gaps, the stark fact remains that Hispanic youth are significantly more likely to be at risk of educational failure than their non-Hispanic peers. With Hispanics projected to make up 25 percent of the K-12 population by 2025, the need to accelerate the rate of gains in achievement is urgent.

In school, low expectations and limited support for success persist for many Hispanic students, who tend to be served by racially and ethnically isolated, high-poverty schools with larger classes and fewer qualified teachers. Furthermore, it is estimated that as many as one-fifth of Hispanic students who have limited English proficiency receive no special services to help ensure that they learn English while making progress in other academic subjects. And while academic achievement gaps between Hispanic and White students appear at all grade levels, the summative impact of these disparities is readily evident in a dropout rate that is nearly four times greater than that of White students and double that of Black students. Crowning these gaps from the pre-kindergarten level through high school is the continuing lag in the proportion of Hispanics that enroll in and complete postsecondary education - which translates into diminished economic opportunities, for individual Hispanics in the work force as well as for the country.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAPS LEAD TO ECONOMIC GAPS

The urgency of these troubling gaps between Hispanic youth and their peers in educational achievement demands concerted awareness and effort because the disparities signal not just diminished possibilities for individual Hispanics, but squandered potential for the economic strength of the nation as a whole. At the Strategy Session, President Clinton released a report from his Council of Economic Advisors entitled Educational Attainment and Success in the New Economy: An Analysis of Challenges for Improving Hispanic Students' Achievement. This report rooted the discussion in the economic realities that underscore the importance of educational achievement. [http://www.whitehouse.gov/media/pdf/Education_Final.pdf]

ONGOING EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Beyond convening and encouraging state, local, private sector and non-profit partners to take action, the Clinton-Gore Administration has made strong and growing financial commitments to programs that help to improve the educational outcomes of Hispanic and limited English proficient students. With respect to early childhood education, the Administration has increased funding for Even Start, has expanded access of Hispanic children to Head Start by approximately 60,000, and has doubled state funding that provides low-income families with childcare subsidies. In order to increase awareness and investment in the schooling needs of Hispanic children from kindergarten through postsecondary education, in 1998 the President and Vice President introduced the Hispanic Education Action Plan (HEAP), which increased funding for several programs essential to raising Hispanic student achievement. Each subsequent year the Administration has fought for and secured increased funding for HEAP programs.

In addition to emphasizing the importance of funding key education programs, HEAP has also focused attention on the value of a coherent action plan for improving the educational outcomes of our nation's Hispanic students. The Department of Education's HEAP implementation plan lays out objectives and performance indicators and includes strategies and actions for improving Hispanic student achievement. The Clinton-Gore agenda also includes vigorous civil rights enforcement to ensure educational opportunities for Hispanics. Furthermore, initiatives such as the America Reads challenge, class size reduction in the early grades, the E-rate, GEAR UP and TRIO, and support for after school and summer school programs help improve Hispanic student achievement. Finally, the Administration's major investment in opening the doors of college to all Americans

CHALLENGING THE NATION TO REACH FIVE KEY GOALS

In the spring of 2000, the White House undertook development of a series of key goals to focus attention on the importance of improving Hispanic student achievement. With support and guidance from members of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Latino community-based organizations, corporate and foundation representatives, and educators from throughout the nation, five national goals were developed to help close the educational achievement gaps for Hispanic students within the next 10 years.

GOAL 1:

Ensure that Hispanic American children have access to high quality early childhood education and development programs and enter school prepared to succeed by increasing the Hispanic participation rate to the national participation rate in high quality programs by 2010.

GOAL 2:

Respecting the importance of multi-lingualism, age-specific learning needs, research-based instructional approaches, and the variety of developmental levels at which LEP children enter school, by 2010 all states and school districts will provide appropriate language instruction to ensure that all students graduate from high school having demonstrated proficiency in English.

GOAL 3:

Provide a high quality education with appropriate resources and support to ensure equal opportunity for all students in order to eliminate the achievement gap between Hispanic students and other students on appropriate state assessments and other indicators by 2010.

GOAL 4:

Increase the high school completion rate to 90 percent by 2010.

GOAL 5:

Double the percentage of Hispanic Americans who earn Associate's and Bachelor's degrees by 2010.

STRATEGIES FOR REACHING THE GOALS

The different backgrounds of the Strategy Session participants generated a valuable mixture of perspectives and ideas on how to address each of the five goals announced by President Clinton. Following each of the goals below are some of the strategies suggested over the course of the development and planning process as well as by participants in the Strategy Session. Not surprisingly, there were common themes cutting across the strategies raised in each of the five goal discussions. Exploring these oft-repeated themes, such as the need for increased outreach to Hispanic communities and community support, more funding for key programs, and well-prepared teachers, as well as the importance of program quality and accountability, may help prioritize efforts. Following are just a few examples of strategies posited in conjunction with the Strategy Session.

GOAL 1:

INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

- Expand outreach to Latino families through Spanish-language media and community organizations such as libraries and faith-based organizations, and encourage existing programs such as Head Start to increase their outreach to Hispanics;
- Increase government and employer investments in and access to affordable early childhood programs and make sure that Latino families are aware of opportunities;
- Improve the quality of early childhood education programs through the establishment of challenging performance standards, dissemination of research on serving Hispanic families, and the active recruitment and training of bilingual and bicultural early childhood educators.

GOAL 2:

ENSURE THAT HISPANIC STUDENTS ACHIEVE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

- Encourage state and local entities to ensure appropriate resources and services for LEP students, through the establishment of clear standards and outcome measures and mechanisms to identify needs and appropriate interventions;
- Support good teaching and training to address the needs of LEP students, by coordinating curricula and teaching with schools of education, pushing for appropriate professional development, and recruiting bilingual professionals to the classroom;
- Create community-wide awareness and expectations to help LEP students achieve academically, through greater cooperation between educators and parents, and by encouraging the private sector to offer mentoring and English as a Second Language programs;
- Promote the advantages of bilingualism, literacy in two languages, by encouraging all students to become proficient in two languages.

GOAL 3:

ELIMINATE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP ON STATE ASSESSMENTS.

- Ensure a rigorous curriculum by making sure that all students are aware of and have access to the coursework necessary for entry to college;
- Emphasize quality teaching in the classroom by training, recruiting, and retaining more educators to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of Hispanic youth, and by enforcing high standards for teacher quality across all schools;
- Involve parents and the community by facilitating communication between families and schools and by enlisting community-based organizations (CBOs) to play an active role in training school personnel and reaching out to parents;
- Ensure that all students, including LEP students, are included in accountability systems and that the systems use appropriate assessments.

GOAL 4:

INCREASE THE RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION.

- Build community and parental involvement by encouraging partnerships among schools, the private sector, and colleges to provide mentoring, tutoring and internship opportunities, and by focusing on outreach to Hispanic families;
- Reform the American High School by focusing on rigorous curriculum opportunities for all students and by increasing student contact with teachers and advisors through smaller learning environments, extended learning opportunities,

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and alternative and dropout recovery programs;

- Improve teachers' ability to work with diverse students through professional development for all teachers and incentive structures that reward bilingual skills and commitments to high-need schools;
- Support and disseminate research focused on best practices and methods for ensuring that Hispanic students complete high school;
- Improve and support state and local data collection so as to create clear data on Hispanic dropouts.

GOAL 5:

DOUBLE THE RATE OF COLLEGE COMPLETION:

- Support college preparation through outreach and information campaigns, and by developing K-16 partnerships and encouraging mentoring programs that expose Hispanic students to community role models;
- Increase the value of associate degree programs by increasing linkages to bachelor degree programs;
- Focus on increasing college retention by developing programs and supports to make sure students stay enrolled in at least one class per semester;
- Expand financial aid through grants and scholarships, including through private and non-profit organizations;
- Support greater enrollment and completion of advanced degrees through fellowship and internship programs in collaboration with private and non-profit entities.

NEXT STEPS: COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT HISPANIC ACHIEVEMENT

In preparing for the Strategy Session, numerous federal agencies, nonprofits, and corporations have come forward to commit to bolstering these national goals with new and expanded initiatives. These commitments include but are not limited to:

- *ACCOUNTABILITY:* The 2010 Alliance, a partnership of corporate, foundation and community leaders that will commit to bring resources and accountability to reach these goals by 2010, was formally announced at the Strategy Session. The Alliance includes: the Ford, Irvine, Kellogg, and Hazen foundations, AT&T, Univision, State Farm Insurance, General Motors Corporation, the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, the National Association for Bilingual Education, the National Council of La Raza, and the National Association for Latino Elected Officials, among others;

- *INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS:* The Departments of Agriculture, Defense and Energy, Sears, Washington Mutual Bank, Inc., and companies partnering with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities announced a variety of mentoring and internship programs;

- *OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS:* Proctor & Gamble, the Discovery en Español channel, the PTA and Hispanic Radio Network, Scholastic, Univision and the National Latino Children's Institute, the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, HHS and HUD all signed on to engage in a range of public information and family outreach campaigns;

- *CAPACITY BUILDING AND INNOVATION:* A number of organizations offered innovative assistance, including the American Library Association, which announced the creation of an award for children's literature that reflects Latino culture, the Department of Commerce's professional exchange program with Hispanic Serving Institution faculty, and a partnership between Lightspan and HUD to close the digital divide by providing educational technology resources for the residents in ten Neighborhood Network Centers in Hispanic communities.

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BACKGROUND

THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUSING ON HISPANIC STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Hispanics are the most rapidly growing population in the United States, comprising 11 percent of the population today and projected to represent 16.5 percent of U.S. residents in twenty years. Education is of particular concern to this expanding population as one-third of Latinos are younger than 18 years old. Between 1978 and 1998 the enrollment of Hispanic students in public elementary schools increased 157 percent, compared to 20 percent for Black students and 10 percent for White students. As the proportion of Hispanics in the K-12 population increases to 25 percent by 2025, many schools and districts are facing new challenges.

Gains have been made in Hispanic student achievement over the past decade, with Latino student scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress rising slightly in both reading and math, and with more Hispanic high school graduates completing a core curriculum and Advanced Placement courses. Nonetheless, population growth has outpaced the academic and social progress required for success in a global economy. Furthermore, Hispanic children face a number of barriers that many of their counterparts do not: their families are disproportionately poorer, and they are concentrated in central cities where racial isolation and inferior resources often abound. In light of the dramatic population shifts and the potential for Latinos to play an increasingly integral role in boosting the productivity of the labor force, improving the education of Hispanic students in the United States must be a national priority.

Evidence suggests that demand has increased for workers who bring strong problem-solving ability and technical skills to the workplace. Educational achievement gaps deny communities the opportunity to participate fully in the growing world economy. As described in the recent report by the President's Council of Economic Advisers commissioned in conjunction with the Strategy Session, "the gap in educational achievement between Hispanics and their peers is a matter of critical importance for Hispanic young people themselves and also to society more generally." As a result, our efforts must be both ambitious and all-inclusive, bringing together commitment, expertise, and resources from across the public, non-profit and private sectors and in every community.

THE CURRENT STATE OF HISPANIC EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

From early childhood, Hispanic children are significantly more likely to be at risk of educational failure than their non-Hispanic peers. Despite increased access to Head Start programs, on average Hispanic children begin elementary school with less preschool experience than either Black or White children. This deficit cannot be overcome when schools have low expectations and provide limited support for Hispanic students. In addition, Hispanic students tend to be concentrated in central cities and racially and ethnically isolated, high-poverty schools with larger classes and fewer qualified teachers. Thirty-nine percent of Hispanic children live in families with an income below the poverty line, a rate more than double that of White children. Furthermore while more than 2 million Hispanic students have limited English proficiency, between 10 and 20 percent of limited English proficient students receive neither English as a Second Language (ESL) nor bilingual education to help ensure students learn English while progressing in other academic subjects.

Achievement gaps between Hispanic and White students persist at all grade levels and across most academic subjects, and over 80 percent of Hispanics are not introduced to college "gateway" classes such as algebra and geometry by the eighth grade. These gaps likely contribute to the unacceptably low high school completion rate for Latinos, which has not changed substantially in the past several years. In 1998, the high school completion rate was 90 percent for White students and 81 percent for Black students, however, for Hispanic students, the high school completion rate was only 63 percent. In addition, Hispanic enrollment and completion in college lags behind most other groups.

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As described in the 1996 report, Our Nation on the Fault Line, a variety of factors–inequity in school financing, school segregation and poverty, underrepresentation of Hispanics among school personnel, lack of multicultural training for school personnel, lack of bilingual and ESL programs, difficulties in accurately assessing student progress–affect the educational achievement of Hispanics.

THE CLINTON-GORE COMMITMENT

President Clinton and Vice President Gore's commitment to ending the era of low expectations for some students by insisting on high standards for all has helped provide the educational opportunities all students need to reach high standards. Starting with the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, improving educational opportunities and outcomes for all Americans has been a cornerstone of the Clinton-Gore Administration. Investing in smaller classes and more after-school programs, enhancing the quality of teaching, making college more affordable, and supporting lifelong learning opportunities are just a few of the policies that this Administration has championed to help close the achievement gap.

In 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12900, which established the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and a Presidential Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, affirming the Administration's commitment to helping Hispanic children reach the same high standards as all other children. The next year, in response to the leadership of Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and others in Congress, the Department of Education established the Hispanic Dropout Project, which charged an advisory team to identify barriers and propose recommendations to reduce the disproportionately high Hispanic dropout rate. The Project's final report, No More Excuses, was released in 1998 and buttressed the Commission's 1996 report, Our Nation on the Fault Line, in laying the groundwork for the historic Hispanic Education Action Plan (HEAP).

Announced by Vice President Gore in February 1998, the HEAP identified key federal programs for improving Hispanic education, established performance indicators, and targeted the component programs for significant increases in the President's FY 1999 budget request. President Clinton and Vice President Gore successfully garnered increased support for these programs in both FY 1999 and FY 2000, and the greatest increase in HEAP funds was requested for FY 2001.

HISPANIC EDUCATION ACTION PLAN (HEAP)

The Clinton-Gore Administration recognized the importance of focused attention on the educational needs of Hispanic students by initiating the comprehensive Hispanic Education Action Plan (HEAP), which includes several programs essential to closing the achievement gap between Hispanic students and their peers. From fiscal year 1998 to fiscal year 2001, the President secured significant increases in key programmatic areas.

	FY98 ($M)	FY01 ($M)
• Adult Education	360.6	560.5
• GEAR-UP	0	295
• TRIO	529.7	730
• Bilingual Education	199	296
• Hispanic Serving Institutions	12	68.5
• High School Equivalent Program	7.6	20
• State Agency Migrant Program	305.5	380
• College Assistance Migrant Program	2.1	10
• Title I Grants to LEAs	7.4 ($B)	8.6 ($B)

These numbers translate into day-by-day help for some of our most vulnerable Americans. Here are some examples:

- The Clinton-Gore Administration has expanded access of Head Start to approximately 60,000 Hispanic children. Today, the program reaches approximately 230,000 Hispanic children.

- This Administration has doubled state funding that provides low-income families with childcare subsidies.

- The Administration has increased investments in the Even Start Family Literacy program, which serves educationally and economically disadvantaged families with children from birth through age seven by combining English language instruction, early childhood education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program.

- The Administration's GEAR UP initiative –Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs – creates partnerships with colleges and universities, community based organizations, and middle schools that are currently preparing 450,000 disadvantaged children for college.

- The TRIO programs, which help low-income, first-generation college and disabled individuals achieve academic success beginning in middle school, and continuing throughout college, now serve 730,000 students.

- The Administration increased support for Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), which serve 40 percent of the 14.5 million Hispanic young adults in college from 12 million in 1997 to 42 million in 2000, and is expected to increase to 62 million by 2001.

- Hispanic students, like all college-bound students, are increasingly enrolling in higher education programs, as the Pell Grants have increased by almost fifteen hundred dollars within the last seven years, from $2,300 to $3,750 a year.

Beyond emphasizing the importance of funding key education programs, HEAP has also focused attention on the value of a coherent Action Plan for improving the educational outcomes of our nation's Hispanic students. The Department of Education's HEAP implementation plan lays out specific objectives and performance indicators related to the educational access and educational achievement of Hispanic students, and includes strategies and specific actions.

As part of the Improving America's Schools conferences in the fall of 1999, for instance, the Department of Education held a number of regional workshops facilitated by literacy and linguistics experts on the teaching of reading to limited English proficient (LEP) students, and the Department is currently developing training materials and videos based on these sessions.

An example of a program-level change generated by the HEAP is the Department's enforcement of Title I provisions requiring states to hold schools and local school districts accountable for the academic performance of Hispanic and LEP students. The Department released guidance which reminds states they must have assessment systems in place by the 2000-01 school year that include Hispanic students and report disaggregated data showing the performance of Hispanic and LEP students. The Department has also launched a program of compliance monitoring and technical assistance to help ensure that states meet these requirements.

In addition, in the summer of 1999, the First Lady hosted a White House Convening on Hispanic Children and Youth. This forum of over 200 community leaders, and foundation and private sector representatives emphasized the importance of ensuring that every child meets his or her full potential. Participants joined federal agency personnel in identifying pathways to achievement for Latino youth, and the risk factors that impede that progress. The First Lady's convening also highlighted promising efforts across the country and examined ways to foster support for new and innovative programs.

Continuing its commitment to Hispanic educational excellence, in the spring of 2000, the White House undertook development of a series of national goals to focus national attention on the importance of improving Hispanic student achievement. With support and guidance from members of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Latino community-based organizations, corporate and foundation representatives, and educators from throughout the nation, five national goals were developed to help close the educational achievement gaps for Hispanic students within the next 10 years. The national goals served as a foundation for the June 15th White House Strategy Session on Improving Hispanic Student Achievement, and will continue to help guide our nation as we strive to ensure educational excellence and equity for all students.

GOALS

As many conference participants affirmed, ensuring the promise of Hispanic students must begin with high expectations for achievement, clear goals for what must be accomplished, and specific benchmarks to measure progress. The standards movement has shown that clear benchmarks and measures are essential to accountability, and these national goals for Hispanic achievement were developed to offer specific definitions of what needs to be accomplished and how these accomplishments will be measured.

The strategies and suggestions discussed at the conference create a blueprint for meeting those goals. The variety of strategies suggested indicates that while there is no single correct answer to overcoming the complex challenges facing Latino students, there is much that schools, parents, communities, and policymakers can do together to better support improved teaching and learning.

This section provides background on the goal areas, current data on the issues, and a series of strategies articulated in meetings prior to and during the Strategy Session. The strategies represent some of the many routes to getting there, and in most cases, provide only the ideas to get started. While these strategies are not intended to represent official positions of the White House, they do reflect some of the best thinking on this topic from practitioners, advocates and policymakers across the country.

GOAL 1

Ensure that Hispanic American children have access to high quality early childhood education and development programs and enter school prepared to succeed by increasing the Hispanic participation rate to the national participation rate in high quality programs by 2010.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Research has shown that access to high quality early childhood education is an important predictor of later school success. Early learning programs help ensure that children are provided the foundation necessary for lifelong learning through language development, early reading, and socialization. Providing a good start for Hispanic children requires a focus on improving early education and childcare by increasing access, ensuring quality, and promoting family literacy. Access to early childhood education programs is lacking for many Hispanics under age five, who represent more than 15 percent of that age group in the United States. Hispanic children under age 5 are less likely than their peers to be enrolled in early childhood education programs. In 1998, for example, only 20 percent of Hispanic 3 year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education programs, compared to 42 percent of White and 44 percent of Black 3 year-olds.

Successful early childhood programs require support from expert personnel – staff who value and respect the culture of the children served and who have the ability to effectively communicate with children and families whose native language is not English. Also essential is that the staff understand the principles of language development that can help children build on their current literacy skills. However, a lack of quality teacher preparation programs and ongoing teacher training, as well as limited access to relevant research present significant challenges to improving early childhood education.

To be successful, efforts to improve Hispanic education must include reaching out to Latino children in the early years, and must reach them where they are–i.e. through family-based childcare, rather than waiting until more Latino children are enrolled in center-based care. Providing access to high quality early childhood programs is also complicated because Hispanic parents often work different hours, tend to earn lower median family incomes, are more likely to care for their children at home, and often have different cultural values tied to their relationships with schools and outside organizations–so reaching out to parents requires a variety of strategies. Similarly, parents need help to become partners in learning through family literacy programs. Building the foundation for literacy is an important component of early childhood education. Reading and telling stories to young children promotes language acquisition, and correlates with later literacy development and overall school success. The Forum on Child and Family Statistics reports that White non-Hispanic children are more likely to be read to aloud every day (61 percent) as compared with Black children (41 percent) or Hispanic children (33 percent). Unfortunately, current literacy campaigns often rely on outreach strategies that are better suited to other ethnic or socio-economic groups and may not reach Hispanics.

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The challenges articulated above are not only present across the country, but are also growing. Over the last few years, the Hispanic population has increased dramatically in communities across the country, from Arkansas and Georgia to Massachusetts and North Carolina. Often, such areas experiencing newer population influxes have little expertise or resources for serving Hispanic students and their families. If this nation is to commit to improving Hispanic student achievement, then it must commit to building a foundation of high quality early childhood opportunities.

THE CLINTON-GORE EXPANSION OF ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

The Clinton-Gore Administration has worked hard to include more Hispanic children in Head Start. Consequently, enrollment has increased by nearly 60,000 during this Administration, with the program now reaching approximately 230,000 Hispanic children. Despite these increases, Hispanic children remain underrepresented, comprising less than 25 percent of Head Start enrollment compared to nearly 30 percent of all low-income preschool children in the nation. In order to expand outreach to Hispanic families, the Administration proposed increasing Head Start funding by $1 billion in FY 2001 in order to serve 950,000 children overall.

This Administration has also worked to improve access to quality childcare for all children by doubling funding available to states to provide low-income families with childcare subsidies. Unfortunately, even with a doubling of investment, only 10 percent of eligible children are being served. The President has called for an increased investment in the Childcare Development Fund to serve an additional 150,000 children this year. Through this effort, the Department of Health and Human Services will continue to help states inform all families of these available childcare subsidies.

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BORN TO READ

Developed by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, Born to Read began as a state-wide program in Florida and has grown to over 500 sites nationally. The purpose of the Florida Born to Read Program is to work with at-risk, low literate, low income, or teen parents or parents-to-be to teach them about the importance of reading to their babies on a regular basis. The program helps parents develop necessary skills to be effective as their child's first teacher and provides age and developmentally appropriate materials to do so. Local project activities include parent and child together (PACT) time that encourages reading as a bonding activity between parent and child. The Florida Born to Read Program also encourages collaboration among health care providers, community service agencies, and local public libraries. These partnerships target parents most in need to help them raise children who are "Born to Read." To reach families where Spanish is the primary language, Spanish-language materials are produced or identified and purchased and provided to them through the library and its partners. The American Library Association brochure "Born to Read: How to Raise a Reader" is available in Spanish as "Naci para Leer: Como Criar un Lector."

Improving access to family literacy has also been key to the Clinton-Gore Administration's efforts to improve education for Hispanics and help more children start school ready to learn. The Administration has continued to increase investments in the Even Start Family Literacy program, a program designed to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy for the nation's low-income families. Even Start serves educationally and economically disadvantaged families with children from birth through age seven. The program combines adult education or English language instruction, early childhood education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program. Nearly 39 percent of the families enrolled in this successful program are Hispanic. Data from the national evaluation of Even Start show that Hispanic families participate in more program services and stay longer in Even Start, and hence are more likely to make greater gains than non-Hispanic families.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ACCESS AND QUALITY

EXPAND OUTREACH STRATEGIES AND ENCOURAGE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a child's first teachers and must be provided with tools to help their child develop important language and literacy skills.

- Use organizations such as hospitals, faith-based organizations, health clinics, employment offices, community agencies, and libraries to build relationships with Latino families. In fact, experience has shown that even grocery stores can prove effective locations for connecting with parents and providing them with tools to improve the quality of parent-child interactions in the early years;
- Include intergenerational approaches that involve grandparents, parents and siblings in children's development;
- Encourage existing programs such as Head Start and Even Start to increase outreach to Hispanics and help provide more resources for early childhood development—from teaching tools to children's books–through home visits;
- Efforts ranging from face-to-face meetings with new or expectant mothers to public service announcements run by the Spanish-language media should underscore the value of early childhood education and provide information on how to both work with young children and gain access to additional resources, including childcare subsidies, tax relief, and childcare or pre-K programs.

INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Stakeholders agreed that more needed to be done to provide families with access to affordable childcare and early education.

- Encourage partnerships between states, local governments, and employers that support early childhood education opportunities;
- Significantly increase state and federal investments in early childhood education, including Head Start and the Childcare and Development Block Grant;
- Increase government and employer investments in and access to affordable early childhood programs and ensure that Hispanic families are aware of opportunities;
- Target outreach to ensure that Hispanic families are aware of both Head Start and the federal childcare subsidies;
- Expand the role of libraries in supporting early childhood development. Because public libraries are free, are situated in nearly every community, and have traditionally worked in partnership with other community agencies, they are uniquely suited to provide quality early childhood educational experiences to underserved populations.

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IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Just increasing access to childcare is not enough to prepare children to learn. It is clear that overall quality needs to be improved in all forms of childcare from home-based to center-based.

- Examine community needs and resources, including improving data collection and investing in research focused on serving Hispanic children and families;
- Encourage greater collaboration across the early childhood community in working together to promote challenging performance standards for pre-K children;
- Recruit and support early childhood educators who are bilingual and bicultural;
- Provide educators with quality materials and curricula in both English and Spanish;
- Invest in ongoing professional development for early childhood educators.

FAMILY RESOURCE AGENCY, ROSSVILLE, GEORGIA

Family Resource Agency of North Georgia is a subsidiary organization of Family Resource Agency, Inc., a multi-faceted, not-for-profit organization that offers services at over 30 locations in a fifteen county area encompassing portions of two states. The agency has been a Head Start grantee for over fifteen years and has existed as an agency for over twenty-five years. The agency operates two separately funded Head Start programs; the original Head Start grant was awarded to the Tennessee program to serve four counties in the southeast portion of the state, and the Georgia program which operates in six counties in the northwest corner of the state was funded as a replacement grantee. In addition to the two Head Start programs, the Agency operates a Family Violence Program (shelter for battered women and their children), Child Care Program for infants, toddlers and pre-school children, and a Child Care Broker Program. The Agency has made particular efforts in areas with growing Hispanic populations, including in Whitfield County. Currently 60 percent of the Dalton City School children speak Spanish, whereas only a handful did just a few years ago. The program has grown in recent years from serving 180 children and families to serving 300 families – of which over 50 percent are Spanish-speaking. The Head Start program has met this challenge by hiring bilingual teaching and family service staff and a full-time translator. Materials going home are translated using English on one side and Spanish on the other, and classroom staff label items in both languages and order books and other materials that are printed in Spanish and English. The bilingual staff works with the children, families, and care providers during meetings and appointments and in day-to-day activities. The Family Resource Agency is the primary service provider for the Spanish-speaking population as most other child care providers do not provide bilingual services.

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GOAL 2

Respecting the importance of multilingualism, age-specific learning needs, research-based instructional approaches, and the variety of developmental levels at which limited English proficient (LEP) children enter school, by 2010 all states and school districts will provide appropriate language instruction to ensure that all students graduate from high school having demonstrated proficiency in English.

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE

It is imperative that Hispanic students are afforded all of the resources necessary for success in all academic areas including English. Although most immigrants arrive in the United States with limited English proficiency, they often overcome language, cultural and economic barriers to succeed, prosper, and contribute. A 1998 study of Hispanics in Florida found "a positive correlation between English proficiency and socioeconomic status and suggested that the ability to speak English provides an advantage in the labor force that translates into higher incomes, lower poverty rates, higher educational achievement levels, and employment in higher-paying occupations." Census Bureau data also indicates that individuals working full-time and who speak English "very well" or "well" in addition to another language earn as much as 50 percent more than individuals working full-time who speak English "not well" or "not at all". These findings reinforce the importance of meeting the needs of the 40 percent of students who have difficulty speaking English and never complete high school.

As global markets become increasing available to all, language becomes increasingly important in the international arena. Knowledge of a second language is power and the second language inherent to LEP students is a valuable asset that will benefit them and their community throughout their lives. As Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, has noted, "we must find ways to prepare the more racially and culturally diverse pool of young people who will be flowing into jobs and operating businesses in the twenty-first century."

Closing the achievement gap between Hispanic students and their non-Hispanic peers requires a serious commitment to ensure that all children become proficient in English, while also reaching high standards in all core academic subjects. Nationwide, there are more than 3.4 million – and perhaps as many as 7 million – limited English proficient students, and the number of LEP students has nearly doubled in less than a decade. LEP students comprise between seven and 15 percent of all students and about one in four public school students in California and New Mexico, and about one in eight students in Texas, Arizona and Florida. Although about 1.3 million students are in state and local bilingual programs, too many identified LEP students are not served through any special program. Furthermore, over 75 percent of all limited English proficient students attend high poverty schools. Hispanic students are by far the largest population of LEP students nationwide; students with Spanish language background make up more than 72 percent of all LEP students. (Vietnamese students represent 3.9 percent, Hmong 1.8 percent, Cantonese 1.7 percent, and Cambodian 1.6 percent).

Though a landmark Supreme Court ruling in the 1974 Lau v. Nichols case strengthened the standard of education for non-English speakers by requiring districts to take "affirmative steps" to overcome educational barriers faced by non-English speaking students to equalize opportunities, difficulties still persist in the education of LEP students.

Among the many obstacles to educating LEP students is the difficulty and inconsistency in identifying and diagnosing students who need additional language support, as well as tracking the progress of LEP students in both achieving academically and learning English. Each state has its own definition and measure of English proficiency. Likewise, states, districts, and schools often have different policies for the inclusion of LEP students in assessments of student progress. As a result, there is little national (or even statewide) data to describe schools' effectiveness in helping LEP students master challenging content or learn English. Appropriate indicators and relevant data collection processes need to be developed.

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There are a variety of instructional approaches that, when implemented effectively, can help students with specific language needs both learn English and master challenging content:

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL): Students are taught to read, speak, write, and understand English, including grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language and is usually taught during specific school periods; the remainder of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual program.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION: Academic instruction is provided in the native language while also learning English (typically through ESL). Designed to enable LEP students to make a transition to all-English instruction, without losing ground in core academic subjects, the most common bilingual education approaches include transitional bilingual education, developmental bilingual education maintenance programs, and dual language/two-way bilingual immersion programs.

TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION (TBE): Grade-level content instruction is provided in the native language until students develop the English skills necessary for successful English-based instruction.

DEVELOPMENTAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION (DBE): Students are provided content instruction in both English and the native language, teaching English and developing academic proficiency in both languages.

DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION TWO-WAY IMMERSION: Provides instruction that integrates content and language to both LEP and English-speaking students. All students learn a second language, develop proficiency in the first-language, master challenging content, and develop cross-cultural understanding.

Furthermore, the demand for services and qualified teachers to help LEP students far outstrips the supply. Only 2.5 percent of teachers are certified to teach bilingual education or ESL, and a report by the General Accounting Office found that many school districts with high concentrations of LEP students were not adequately providing bilingual services.

Although the importance of mastering English is clear, choosing the best strategy for the students and school to be served, and mustering the appropriate resources to effectively implement those strategies are fundamental challenges that we must address. While the research is limited, there are successful examples of programs that help ensure English proficiency and achievement to high academic standards across the country. These include a variety of strategies, including bilingual education programs which use the native language to help teach content while also providing English instruction, dual-language programs which help both LEP and native English speakers learn English and another language, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs which use experts in language learning to provide instruction in English, English-immersion programs, and other instructional methods that are helping children reach high academic standards while becoming proficient in English.

CLINTON-GORE: HELPING LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS SUCCEED

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have consistently supported increases in funding for bilingual education programs, teacher recruitment and teacher quality initiatives, smaller classes in the early grades to help kids learn to read, after-school and summer school programs and other investments that support LEP children's learning. New provisions in the 1994 Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization as well as recent budget increases make clear state and local obligations to serve LEP students, reinforce professional development programs, increase attention to the value of the native language, support foreign language instruction, improve research and evaluation at state and local levels, increase support for immigrant education, and allow participation of some private school students. Recognizing that our nation can grow even stronger if all our children grow up learning two languages, additional Title VII bilingual education funds have been requested to prepare educators to teach limited English proficient students, and Secretary of Education Richard Riley is championing a movement to ensure every child learns English plus another language by dedicating increased resources to dual language/two-way immersion programs.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Participants raised the importance of language and communication in promoting self-esteem, confidence, motivation and a positive attitude toward education, as well as the importance of expectations in fostering student success as critical to this issue. They also recognized that, while the economic and cultural advantages of speaking English are paramount in the United States, the ability to speak more than one language is an advantage to be celebrated and promoted. Some participants suggested that a goal for all students to learn English plus another language would be more appropriate.

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ENSURE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR LEP STUDENTS

As we implement a system that sets high standards for all children, and includes consequences both for students and for schools that do not help students reach those standards, it becomes increasingly important to provide appropriate resources to help all children succeed.

- Establish clear goals and outcome measures for educational programs such as ensuring children learn English, are bilingual, or are biliterate;
- Develop standards and assessments to identify LEP students and accurately measure language proficiency to inform teaching and cultivate accountability;
- Implement measures to identify early reading difficulties, many of which are tied to limited English proficiency, and develop appropriate interventions;
- Provide supports to address limited English proficiency, illiteracy and prolonged reading difficulties in older students, particularly students who come to U.S. schools in the later grades;
- Ensure that the LEP students are held to the same high content standards as all students;
- Ensure on-going support for students who either come to school with enough English to be disqualified from ESL but still are not proficient in English or have transitioned out of specialized language programs but are likely to struggle academically;
- Extend learning opportunities through after school, summer school, extended day and extended year programs;
- Seek out non-traditional funding sources such as corporations or foundations to support English proficiency and literacy programs;
- Fund research to improve the teaching of language minority children, such as increasing educators' understanding of how children transfer skills from one language to another, as well as which strategies are transferable;
- Disseminate effective, research-based practices for educating LEP students to achieve proficiency in English and other core academic subjects and support the replication of proven strategies;
- Support the development and dissemination of software and other technology that can support the learning of English.

SUPPORT GOOD TEACHING

Every parent knows what research confirms, a good teacher can make all the difference in a child's success. Unfortunately, many teachers are not prepared to address the special needs of LEP students, leaving students, parents and teachers frustrated.

- Foster the expectation that children entering our public schools at any age are capable of learning to high academic standards, and the understanding that it is the responsibility of educators and the community to ensure that students are provided the opportunity to do so;
- Help teachers to better understand the differences between learning disabilities and difficulties understanding English to ensure that LEP students are not mis-identified as students with disabilities;
- Work with schools of education to ensure all new teachers are trained in effective, research-based approaches to teach LEP students English, while also ensuring progress in other academic areas;
- Ensure that all teachers, especially those serving LEP students, have access to high-quality, ongoing, professional development to help them support English language acquisition that is aligned to challenging standards;
- Increase opportunities for teachers to observe and learn from each other, as well as to receive feedback to improve instruction and better serve LEP students;
- Encourage principals and other administrators to spend more time in the classroom, observing teachers' methods and students' difficulties, to better plan, support and implement reform strategies;

ELIZABETH LEARNING CENTER, CUDAHY, CA

Elizabeth Learning Center is a K-12 school with almost 3,000 students. The Center started their new approach in July of 1993 by incorporating the practice of using the community to teach. The vision of the Learning Center is to make ESL computer technology available to student and parents alike and create an entire Learning Community. Elizabeth Learning Center strengthens the community by providing access to ESL adult education programs, Head Start Home Bases and child care to make their learning experience as rewarding as possible. In the school itself, much of the curriculum is organized around central themes and across subject areas. The curriculum focuses on personally meaningful issues so that learning is relevant to students. Teachers are encouraged to use the community as a learning laboratory in which students may apply their knowledge and skills to projects. The Elizabeth Learning Center's goal is for every student to acquire fluency and comprehension in reading at or above his or her grade level, form quality communication skills, and an understanding of fundamental mathematics, science, literature, history, social studies, the arts, health and their applications in life. Elizabeth Learning Center feels this will give students the ability to effectively process and evaluate information while finding creative and workable solutions to problems. They feel that through this form of teaching they can foster a feeling of responsibility, confidence, integrity, curiosity and a desire for pursuit of lifelong learning.

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- Pair bilingual and regular education teachers together to "team-teach" in classrooms with LEP students to provide opportunities for teachers to learn from each other while providing instruction that integrates language development and content learning;
- Increase federal, state and non-profit investment in the recruitment and training of teachers with bilingual ability;
- Encourage talented, Hispanic mid-career professionals to use alternative routes to certification to become teachers;
- Support career ladder programs that help recruit teachers from within the community, such as through training programs that help paraprofessionals become certified teachers.

INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY

We must ensure that all children who graduate from our high schools with a diploma can read and possess the skills needed to succeed in college. Working together in partnerships and engaging the entire community to nurture high expectations and participate in the education of its children are essential to reaching this goal.

- Ensure that teachers have the time, skills, and motivation to interact effectively with parents and the community, such as through home-visit programs, community "back to school days," and more frequent parent-teacher meetings;
- Include teachers, parents, principals and students in the learning process by creating more opportunities for substantive interaction;
- Facilitate cooperation between parents and educators to promote good behavior and strong discipline;
- Increase the number of tutors and mentors for LEP students by recruiting Hispanics, including senior citizens and other adults who are proficient in English, to mentor and read to LEP children;
- Increase parents' access to high-quality adult ESL programs by encouraging businesses, community based organizations, schools and governments to offer more English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in the after-school and evening hours for students and their families;
- Tap into the corporate need for bilingual employees by encouraging the private sector to support English language tutoring for children and adults and adapt successful corporate training strategies to help students become proficient in English;
- Foster cohesion and collaboration among advocates for LEP children;
- Facilitate collaboration between public and private schools to work together to address this issue.

PROMOTE THE ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUALISM

Ensuring that students demonstrate proficiency in English prior to graduation will necessarily involve many different strategies and approaches. Many at the Strategy Session advocated for the strengths of bilingualism and the importance of learning English without compromising the benefits of knowing and speaking a second language.

- Help students and educators appreciate the value of multilingualism with information campaigns and professional development;
- Encourage all students to become proficient in two languages;
- Promote the development of effective dual immersion programs;
- Support the recruitment and training of more foreign language teachers to offer more children the opportunity to become bilingual;
- Ensure appropriate resources are devoted to promoting proficiency in two languages.

CORAL WAY BILINGUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIAMI, FL

Coral Way's mission is to establish an environment that promotes self-esteem, respect, and discipline in the school community and to enhance students' opportunities to become bilingual and biliterate. It is the only school in the nation that incorporates E.D. Hirsch's CORE Knowledge Curriculum into a holistic, bilingual theme-based program. The literature-based instruction interrelates all curriculum areas, infuses a technology-based focus, and incorporates a cooperative learning, problem-solving approach. Innovative instructional strategies focus both on achievement and on students becoming independent learners. As a two-way bilingual school, all students from pre-kindergarten through grade five are instructed in both English and Spanish. On a daily basis, 60 percent of the instruction is presented in English, with 40 percent in Spanish. In both the English and Spanish components, students receive instruction in reading , language arts, science, and social studies by teachers who are fully proficient in the designated languages. Mathematics is taught bilingually by the Spanish component teachers.

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GOAL 3

Provide a high quality education with appropriate resources and support to ensure equal opportunity for all students in order to eliminate the achievement gap between Hispanic students and other students on appropriate state assessments and other indicators by 2010.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Over the last eight years, considerable progress has been made in setting high expectations for what every child should know and be able to do. Today, forty-nine states have developed content standards and are working to align their systems of assessments and accountability with those standards. Progress has also been made in the level of student performance across the country, even in our highest poverty schools. Since 1992, reading and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have increased for fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders. Reading and math scores for nine year-olds in our highest poverty schools have improved by nearly one grade level since 1992. In 1996, average NAEP scores for nine year-olds increased eight points, and the gap between nine year-olds in high-poverty schools and all nine year-olds decreased to 22 points. The number of students taking AP exams has increased by two-thirds, to more than 581,000 in 1997, and the fraction of graduating seniors taking a core curriculum has grown to 55 percent. Of note, Hispanic students have been making gains at a greater rate than students as a whole since 1992; on the eighth grade NAEP math test, for example, the percentage gain for Hispanic students was more than double the average gain for all students.

Despite such progress for Hispanic students as a group, the gap between Hispanic students and their peers remains. For example, just 39 percent of Hispanic eighth graders score at or above the basic level of the NAEP math test compared to 62 percent of all eighth graders. In 1996, the average scores on the reading, math and science NAEP exams for Hispanic 17 year-olds were well below those of their White peers. Finally, the dropout rate for white students is lower than the rates for Hispanic and black students – for instance, in 1998, the dropout rate for White students was 8 percent, compared to 14 percent for black students and 30 percent for Hispanic students.

Closing the achievement gap necessitates action on a number of fronts, starting with a focus on improving access to and quality of early childhood education and opportunity and English language acquisition, but also including high quality teachers, access to technology, and effective parental and community involvement.

Accountability measures for schools, teachers and students linked to an expectation that all students can achieve to high standards also holds significant promise for our nation's youth, particularly Hispanic Youth. By developing appropriate, multi-faceted assessment tools that are linked to clear standards and supported by necessary resources, we can more accurately gauge the progress of our efforts and ensure that all students reap the benefits of standards-based reform.

Too few teachers have the skills and support necessary to help their students master challenging content. Fewer than one in five teachers reports feeling prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students despite the fact that more than half of all teachers have a student with limited English proficiency in their classroom and 14 percent of all students are Hispanic. Teacher education programs need to do more to prepare new teachers for the challenges of both diverse classrooms and teaching rigorous content. Essential to meeting the challenges of improving Hispanic student performance is the elimination of what one participant called the "less than" thinking; if we expect less, that is exactly what we get. Teachers need to enter the classroom with the expectation that every child has the ability and potential to learn.

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In the area of technology, the Digital Divide, which describes the gaps in access to and the ability to use technology, persists across the nation along racial and economic lines. In 1998, close to half of White non-Hispanic households had computers, compared with 25 percent of Hispanic households, and whereas close to 40 percent of White non-Hispanics reported using the Internet from any location in 1998, only 16 percent of Hispanics reported Internet usage. Such gaps in access to critical technology demands an even greater urgency in ensuring that our schools are providing access to and instruction in the effective use of technology for all students.

Finally, parents and communities play an integral role in student achievement. As described in a 1998 National Council of La Raza report, "Hispanic parents face extraordinary obstacles to participating more effectively in their children's education, including their own low levels of educational attainment, high poverty rates, language and literacy barriers, and an often indifferent or hostile educational system." From enrolling their children in school to providing permission for field trips and participation in extracurricular activities, the maze of school policies, forms, and procedures can be confusing, and even hostile.

JUST US, INC., NEW YORK, NY

Just Us, which received a Community Service Award from the United Way in 1997, works primarily with youth in East Harlem. One of the programs they run is called the Community Achievement Program (CAP), which provides individual and group interventions for students identified as "at risk" due to excessive absences, as well as reading assistance through an extended school day component. In 1997-98, two-thirds of CAP participants improved their reading proficiency by 10 or more percentile points.

CLINTON-GORE INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked tirelessly to end the era of low expectations that has long plagued particularly poor and minority students. In 1993, the Clinton-Gore Administration proposed and fought for legislation requiring states to establish rigorous standards for what children should learn, institute regular tests to measure progress, and provide accountability for results. This legislation (the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Improving America's Schools Act) ensured that states held disadvantaged students to the same high standards established for all students. Nearly all fifty states now have these results-driven systems in place, and while a considerable achievement gap still remains between Hispanic students and their peers, under the standards-based reforms of this Administration, the achievement gap has been narrowing.

In addition to strengthened accountability measures, a number of other key Administration initiatives have played a role in increasing the educational achievement of Hispanic students. Thanks to the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund and the E-rate program, virtually all schools have computers for student learning and 95 percent of schools are connected to the Internet so that all children have access to the wealth of information to help them learn. In addition, the Clinton-Gore Administration has emphasized the importance of hiring well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades, when children learn to read and master basic skills. Since the start of this Administration, 1.7 million children have benefited from smaller class sizes. The Administration's 21st Century Community Learning Centers program supports extended learning opportunities that focus on academics before and after school, on weekends and during the summer for over 850,000 students. The America Reads program, a grassroots national campaign that challenges every American to help our children read well, has been successful. The Clinton-Gore Administration has provided increased support for local school districts that benefit all children through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It has also pioneered reforms proven to improve academic performance, academic standards, and ensure that all children receive a world class education. Programs such as GEAR-UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), enable low-income students to be better prepared academically to enroll in college. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have increased access to student financial aid programs that make college more affordable, including HOPE scholarships and Lifelong Learning tax credits, significant increases in Pell Grants and work-study programs and more affordable student loans.

STRATEGIES TO NARROW THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The following are a wide range of actions to address and narrow the achievement gap that persists between Hispanic students and their peers.

PURSUE A RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

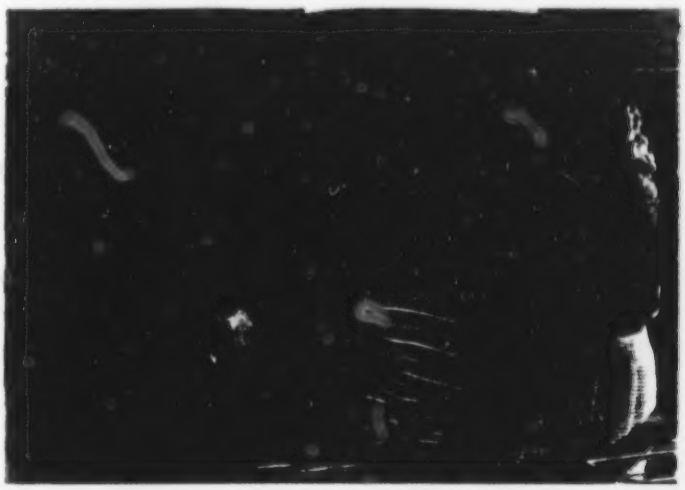
Ensuring that all students are aware of and prepared for the requirements of college, and that they understand the importance of both a high school diploma and postsecondary education is key to closing the achievement gap.

- Ensure states are fully in compliance with Title I and other ESEA provisions;
- Ensure schools are offering curricula aligned with state standards;
- Encourage school districts to work collaboratively with teachers to implement high standards in every classroom;
- Ensure states are using sound testing practices by encouraging the use of multiple measures in assessing students; developing appropriate assessments and accommodations for assessment; ensuring LEP students are effectively included in state assessments; disseminating and promoting guidance on appropriate testing and valid measures; and using disaggregated testing data and other strategies to help educators use assessment results to inform practices and allocate resources;
- Ensure that all children are exposed to a rigorous curriculum that prepares them to meet high academic standards;
- Incorporate Latino culture into classroom learning to expand cultural awareness and promote improved self-esteem among students;
- Prepare students to take the necessary coursework that is required for entry to most colleges and universities—including algebra, geometry, and advanced placement courses;
- Eliminate the use of "tracking" and ensure all students have access to a challenging curriculum.

ALLOCATE RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY TO ADDRESS THE LEARNING NEEDS OF HISPANIC STUDENTS

Equitable resource allocation is a critical component to ensuring that Hispanic students are offered the supports they need to succeed.

- Ensure that state resources are aligned with need;
- Improve targeting of and access to federal investments and programs and increase investment in programs that are effectively addressing the educational needs of Hispanic students, including HEAP programs;
- Offer additional supports for migrant and other at-risk Hispanic children including systems to transfer or share student records and achievement information;
- Invest in closing the digital divide by ensuring teachers are trained in effective use of technology;
- Offer disadvantaged communities more access to technology through Community Based Technology Centers, school computer labs and other public resources.



THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR - ALPHA PROGRAM
VOLUSIA COUNTY, FL

In 1975, The House Next Door began the Alpha Program with the School Board of Volusia County, Florida, as a short-term, school-based, prevention and intervention counseling program. The major goal of the program is to prevent the development of disruptive behavior patterns for children nine to eleven years of age, starting in grades four to five. Students are provided intensive classroom counseling and an academic program while parents are involved in their child's progress through parenting education and family counseling. Students may remain in the Alpha Program for one school year. A cooperative effort between a school district and a nonprofit, family counseling agency has helped students be successful by keeping 100 percent of the students in school and decreasing the number of expulsions by 80 percent. The model is successfully implemented in three locations within the Volusia County Public School System.

ENSURE QUALITY TEACHING

All students deserve to have well-qualified and prepared teachers in their classrooms. Research has shown that teacher quality is one of the most important factors in increasing student achievement.

- Train more teachers-including bilingual educators-to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students;
- Reduce the disproportionate number of unqualified teachers who are serving students who most need expert support;
- Focus on recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. If schools are serious about high standards for Hispanic students, then they must also insist on high standards for those that provide them instruction;
- Provide greater support and mentoring to teachers in their early years, when too many end up leaving the profession, as well as throughout their careers through ongoing professional development and learning opportunities;
- Raise standards for all teachers by rigorously testing all new teachers (including testing middle and high school teachers in the subject they will teach, and elementary school teachers in their knowledge of teaching reading), ensuring all teachers are qualified according to state standards and have a major or minor or demonstrated knowledge in the subject they teach, and offering mentoring and other support to new teachers;
- Inform educators of the importance of expectations in children's success;
- Encourage Hispanic mid-career professionals to use alternative routes to certification to become teachers.

INVOLVE PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

Parents are their children's first teachers and are in the best position to guide them through their educational careers. Empowering parents with the resources they need to offer their children support and guidance as they learn and grow in knowledge must be taken seriously by all of us.

- Implement parental involvement strategies that make the school system easier to navigate for parents and students;
- Identify and support role models for younger students that include older students, parents, senior citizens and other community members;
- Support more teacher home visits, and publicly funded and community-based childcare and transportation to facilitate interaction among teachers, principals and parents.

GOAL 4

Increase the high school completion rate to 90 percent by 2010.

ENSURING STUDENTS COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL

Over the last half century, the importance of a high school diploma has changed markedly. The achievement of a high school diploma once opened the door to a promising career pathway. In today's workforce and economy, obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent is a critical gateway to the further education needed for individuals to compete and create opportunity.

Indeed, in today's economy, dropping out of high school is a passport to a low-wage future. In 1998, for instance, the median annual earnings of high school dropouts working full time was $20,585, compared to $26,592 for those with a high school diploma or GED, $41,872 for those with a bachelor's degree and $75,239 for those with a professional degree. In the case of Hispanics with equivalent educational levels, median earnings in 1998 were $17,257, $23,154, $35,691 and $51,373, respectively. Clearly, for those who fail to complete their high school education, opportunities in the workforce diminish greatly and access to high wage jobs is virtually shut off.

The United States made impressive gains in increasing the high school completion rate from the 1950s to the 1970s. However, despite the increasing importance of a high school education over the last half-century, the rate at which Americans complete high school has not changed dramatically. From 1985 through 1998 (the most recent data), the proportion of 18-24 year olds who obtained a diploma or equivalent credential has been approximately 85 percent.

Both White and Black students have made positive gains over the past quarter-century in rates of high school completion. The share of 18-24 year-old White students completing high school stands at 90 percent, having increased from 86 percent in the early 1970s. Black students have also posted significant gains, with rates rising throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The rate has remained steady in the 1990s, with 81.4 percent of 18-24 year-old Blacks having completing high school in 1998.

The story for Hispanic students is a different one. In 1998, 62.8 percent of 18-24 year-old Latinos had completed high school. Unlike the completion rates of their White and Black counterparts, completion rates for Hispanic students have fluctuated over the past 25 years, with no clear trend in either direction. Moreover, the 1998 figure is approximately where rates were in the mid-1980s and represents a 6 percent decline since 1997.

The dropout rate paints an equally disparate picture. The rate of 16-24 year-olds who were not in school and have not earned a high school credential during the 1997-98 school year, was 7.7 percent for non-Hispanic whites and 13.8 pecent for non-Hispanic blacks. The rate for Hispanic students increased to 29.5 percent. Many experts correctly point out that the Hispanic dropout rate is a complex story. While Latino youth aged 16 through 24 with both parents also born in the U.S. have a dropout rate of 15 percent; Hispanic youth born outside the United States have a 39 percent dropout rate. However, the fact remains that the lowest dropout rate for Hispanic youth (that of U.S. born with U.S. born parents) is still twice that of their non-Hispanic White peers and greater still than the rate for non-Hispanic Blacks.

The low high school completion rate of Hispanic Americans is reaching crisis proportions. With relatively low rates of the nation's fastest growing student population group completing high school, it is not just individual opportunity that will be put in jeopardy—it is the national economy. Stakeholders at all levels must come together to develop and implement strategies to achieve the important national goal of having at least 90 percent of Hispanic students graduating from high school by the year 2010.

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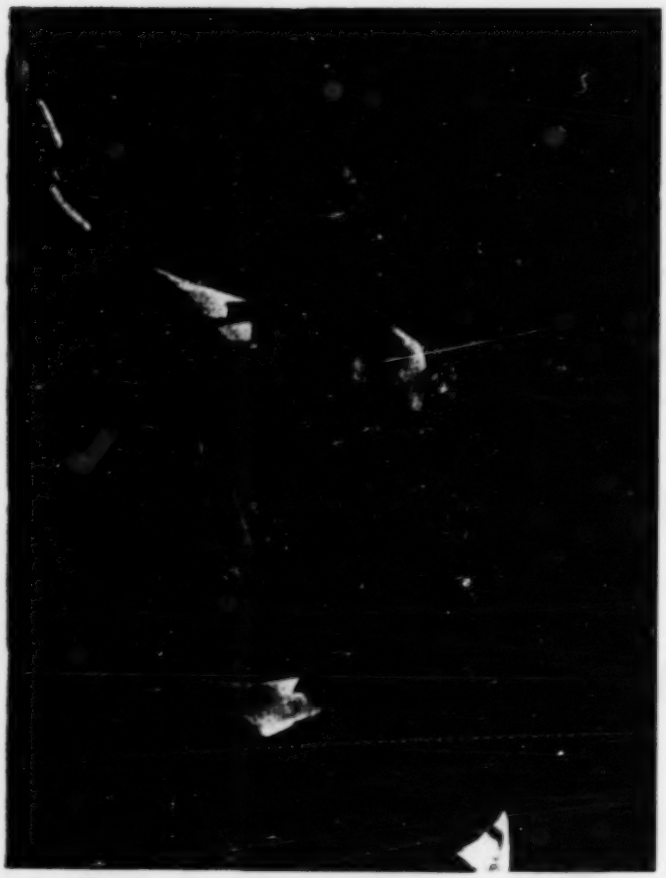
CLINTON-GORE EFFORTS TO INCREASE HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

The Clinton-Gore Administration is committed to building a foundation for school success by increasing access for Hispanic students to Head Start and other early childhood education opportunities, Title I, challenging coursework, smaller classes and learning communities, after-school programs and other extended learning opportunities. For example, currently 95 percent of high-poverty schools are receiving federal Title I funds, compared to 79 percent in 1994; and 1.7 million children are benefiting from smaller classes. All of these programs have been shown to bolster literacy and research shows that reading difficulties are a key indicator for dropping out of school.

The federal government is also committed to expanding access for Hispanics to mentoring and college access programs such as the GEAR-UP and TRIO programs – over half a million low-income students are preparing for college thanks to the new GEAR-UP program, and increased support of TRIO has enabled improvements to the program and expansion to greater numbers of students. These programs help students to understand the value of completing high school and provide the supports needed for them to achieve that goal. In addition, through a focus on smaller schools, charter schools, and reforming the American high school, the federal government is helping to ensure that there are high quality options available to meet the varying needs of adolescent students.



Specific to the dropout prevention effort, in 1995, the Department of Education established the Hispanic Dropout Project, which charged an advisory team to identify barriers and propose recommendations to reduce the disproportionately high Hispanic dropout rate. The Project's final report, *No More Excuses*, was released in 1998. The Department also provides grants to school districts and community organizations across the country through the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program. The program funds projects that provide extra support to students and that create smaller and more personal environments for students at risk of dropping out.

In addition to the Department of Education's efforts, several other executive branch agencies have initiated programs to decrease the dropout rate and increase levels of high school graduation. Those efforts include the Department of Agriculture's Project SOAR, a one-on-one tutoring and mentoring program focused largely for Hispanic 4th through 5th and 6th graders; the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Youthbuild program, which offers 16 to 24 year-olds the opportunity to earn a high school diploma or GED, learn a valuable trade, and provide much-needed housing to families nationwide; and The Department of Justice's Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) which supports one-on-one mentoring programs for youth at risk of dropping out of school.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

Stakeholders discussed key challenges, barriers, strategies and resources for constructing a comprehensive strategy. In that conversation, participants discussed the challenges of access to preschool; the lack of cultural and social capital; the inequality of resources in many neighborhoods and school systems populated by Hispanics; low expectations from teachers and administrators; low aspirations by Latino students; poor counseling; and less-than-rigorous curricular options. In response to these challenges, participants identified the following as critical strategies for a comprehensive focus on increasing the high school completion rate of Hispanic students to 90 percent by the year 2010.

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BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Partnerships among schools, the private sector, government, colleges and universities, nonprofits, and foundations are critical to providing needed services, tapping existing expertise, and leveraging resources.

- Encourage business and community-based organizations to establish mentoring, tutoring and internship programs for high school students;
- Create private sector internship and apprenticeship partnerships that connect students to jobs during their high school years;
- Construct higher education partnerships that focus on bilingual students and provide information and access to postsecondary opportunities;
- Develop outreach and school-based programs to help Hispanic parents feel welcome and connect them to their children's education;
- Stimulate Hispanic parent involvement by designing a public relations model that includes providing materials in Spanish.

REFORM THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

Students need a learning climate conducive to keeping them in school and earning a high school diploma. The current structure of the American high school is often antithetical to the individualized needs of many Hispanic students;

- Ensure all students have access to challenging coursework, including Advanced Placement courses and honors courses, and ensure that curriculum, learning expectations, and assessments are aligned;
- Develop programs tailored to students who enter U.S. high schools with limited English proficiency;
- Invest in programs that combine rigorous academic standards with workforce-relevant applications and professional experience and promote school-to-work and other career awareness programs;
- Ensure that schools, districts, and states are accountable for including Hispanic students in assessments and that data is available and used appropriately to improve teaching and learning; Ensure access to technology (i.e. computer usage, Internet) in all K-12 schools, especially those with high percentages of Hispanic students;
- Reduce class sizes and provide small-school settings (small schools or schools within schools) to foster connections and ensure a greater degree of individual attention;
- Ensure that more college counselors and curriculum advisors are prepared to reach out to and effectively serve Hispanic students;
- Assign every student to a school staff member for a weekly "focus session" to track progress;
- Offer extended learning time such as before- and after-school programs and summer school, distance learning, and other alternative learning systems to the traditional high schools while ensuring achievement to high standards;
- Provide counseling, diagnostic, health, and other social services needs for students as a part of school services;
- End the practice of social promotion while ensuring supports for student success;
- Create and offer flexible time programs;
- Support and develop high-quality dropout recovery and GED programs;
- Create incentives for strong linkages among schools for common approaches and the dissemination of successful practices;
- Increase federal investment in GEAR UP and TRIO to serve more Hispanic students.

STATES MAKING PROGRESS TO INCREASE HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

IOWA. At 3 percent, Iowa has one of the lowest dropout rates in the country. Since 1984, the state has been providing funding to local districts for dropout prevention services. Effective local efforts throughout the state include mentoring systems; before-and after-school programs for at-risk students; peer tutoring; summer academic programs; and student leadership experiences. The state also supports 94 alternative schools, most of which provide alternative learning environments within high schools.

GEORGIA. Recognized as a national leader in this area, Georgia's high school completion effort focuses on helping students make strong progress in their reading and math skills. The state's key investments have been to develop The Reading Challenge, an academic after-school program for 4th-8th graders, and Family Connection, a program providing funds for coordinated strategies among state a gencies. The state is reengineering its alternative schools from a focus on students with discipline problems to those who are academically behind.

NEW YORK. Extended learning time, smaller learning environments, and comprehensive support systems are the hallmarks of New York State's successful dropout prevention efforts. The state uses a Centers for Disease Control model, whereby they provide professional development and resources to create healthy environments for teaching and learning, including a focus on emotional, physical and other factors.

AVID (ACHIEVEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION CENTER), SAN DIEGO, CA

AVID is a nationally recognized program designed to give students who ordinarily would not be in rigorous, academic, college-preparatory classes the opportunity to take such classes and the support to succeed in them. Students are recruited for the program at the middle and high school levels. They are then enrolled in a college preparatory sequence and in an elective section of AVID, through which students are given the academic and motivational support to succeed. Within AVID, students are coached by college tutors and work in collaborative groups using a curriculum writing sequence and grade-level study skills in preparation for college entrance and placement exams. This program began with one group of students in 1980. It is currently being implemented in all 57 public high schools in San Diego County, along with 65 middle schools and some elementary schools. The state of California has over 400 AVID programs and over 700 schools in 13 states, as well as in Europe and Asia, are adopting it. Currently, 87 percent of AVID graduates from San Diego County enrolling at San Diego State University pass the writing portion of the college placement exam.

IMPROVE TEACHER QUALITY

Critical to improving Hispanic high school completion rates is a focus on the quality and capacity of the teachers who work with these students on a daily basis. Conference participants suggested a variety of professional development, recruitment, and reward initiatives:

- Work with schools and districts to develop and implement teacher professional development strategy sessions to enhance teachers' understanding of inclusion and achievement for Hispanic students, particularly strategies for promoting both cultural understanding and high expectations for all students;
- Create incentives for high-quality teachers to serve in high-need and predominantly Hispanic-serving schools and districts;
- Increase the pay for teachers who participate in bilingual staff development, are fluent in Spanish, and teach in districts with those needs.

SUPPORT RESEARCH TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Research performs a critical function in identifying best practices, education barriers, gaps in services, and key strategies.

- Fund more research and data collection on effective practices to ensure that Hispanic students complete high school;
- Disseminate effective, research-based practices for educating limited English proficient (LEP) students to achieve academic excellence;
- Conduct research on effective use of Title I resources in high schools;
- Assess the role of high stakes testing and its impact on high school dropout and completion rates;
- Create websites that provide a method of sharing instructional strategies.

GOAL 5

Double the percentage of Hispanic Americans who earn Associate's and Bachelor's degrees by 2010.

THE VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Today, a college education is more important than ever before. In 1998, young men who completed at least a Bachelor's degree earned 150 percent the salary of their peers with no more than a high school diploma—and young women earned twice as much if they had graduated from college. For example, a college graduate earns $600,000 more over a lifetime, on average, than a high school graduate. An Associate's degree is worth $240,000 over a lifetime.

Of students who entered community colleges in 1989, only 18 percent earned an Associate's degree and 6 percent a Bachelor's degree by 1994. Nearly 49 percent hadn't earned a degree and were no longer enrolled. In contrast, 53 percent of students who entered a four-year college had earned a Bachelor's degree, and only 24 percent had dropped out.

While the gaps in college enrollment have narrowed somewhat since the mid-1980s, Hispanics are less likely to be enrolled in institutions of higher education than their peers. Among the population aged 18-24, 20 percent of Hispanics are enrolled, compared to 37 percent overall; and Hispanic students comprise over 11 percent of community college students, but only about 6 percent of students at four-year schools. While postsecondary degree attainment has been rising across the nation in the last decade, Hispanics as a group have not shown consistently strong gains over this period. While 27 percent of the entire U.S. population aged 25 and older holds a bachelor's degree, only 11 percent of Hispanics have earned undergraduate degrees. Similarly, only 5 percent of Hispanics ages 25 and older hold an occupational or academic Associate's degree, compared to 7 percent nationally.

Because of such educational disparities, Hispanics do not have access to the same economic opportunities as other Americans. Median hourly earnings are 21 percent lower for Hispanics than for non-Hispanic Whites. According to the President's Council of Economic Advisers, relatively low levels of Hispanic earnings are explained in large measure by lower levels of educational attainment. After accounting for differences in age and gender and in education, U.S.-born Hispanics were found to earn 6 percent less than non-Hispanic Whites (with the remaining "unexplained" gap due to other unobserved differences, such as quality of education, geographic variation, and discriminatory employment practices).

CLINTON-GORE COMMITMENT TO HIGHER EDUCATION

To help all students fulfill their promise and prepare for postsecondary education, the Administration's Think College Early campaign provides accessible guidance to students and their families as they plan for college. The campaign targets the nation's 19 million adolescents, 20 percent of whom live in poverty. Recognizing that disproportionate numbers of low-income students and minority students attend two-year colleges, Think College Early encourages all students to pursue admission to a four-year college, emphasizing the importance of college preparatory coursework and early financial planning for college. In particular, the campaign urges students to take algebra by the 8th grade, as students who gain early exposure to high school math are far more likely to go to a four-year college than those who do not. Rigor of curriculum is a better predictor of college completion than test scores, class rank and grade point average, and the positive impact of the high school curriculum is far more pronounced for Black and Hispanic students than any other pre-college indicator of academic resources.

To support this effort, in his 1998 State of the Union address, President Clinton proposed a new initiative to make a difference for students in high-poverty schools. Ten months later, Congress enacted GEAR UP—Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs—with broad bipartisan support. This academic year, its first in operation, the GEAR UP initiative—partnerships between colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and middle schools—is building hope, raising expectations, and creating college opportunities for over 450,000 disadvantaged children. Next year it will grow to 750,000 students.

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The Clinton Administration has also expanded the TRIO programs to promote college success. TRIO is a network of initiatives designed to help low-income, first-generation college, and disabled individuals achieve academic success beginning in middle school, throughout college, and into graduate school. Since 1993, funding for the programs has increased by two-thirds, from $388 million to $730 million. Named TRIO in the late 1960s after its first three programs—Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services—TRIO now serves 730,000 students and supports Educational Opportunity Centers, Talent Search, and the Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.

In addition, targeted assistance to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) under the Clinton-Gore Administration has helped launch Hispanic Americans' enrollment in postsecondary education from approximately 782,000 in 1990 to approximately 1.3 million in 1996. There are 195 institutions of higher education defined as HSIs using the criteria designated by the White House Initiative. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are accredited and degree-granting public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education with at least 25 percent or more total undergraduate Hispanic full-time equivalent student enrollment. In many ways, HSIs represent the promise of the nation's emerging Hispanic population in the new millennium. Total investment in HSIs has gone from $12 million in 1995 to $42.25million in 2000. Today, there are nearly 14.5 million students in postsecondary education, of which over 9 percent are Hispanic. Of these, over 40 percent are attending HSIs. These campuses have become a primary path for Hispanics to succeed in higher education.

Furthermore, Federal student financial aid has doubled from $23 billion in 1993 to $60 billion in 2000, including the new Hope Scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits. The Hope Scholarship tax credit provides up to $1,500 in tax relief for the first two years of college, saving 2.6 million families $2.6 billion in 1998. The Lifetime Learning credit—which provides up to $1,000 for juniors and seniors, graduate students, and adults seeking job training—gave 2.3 million families $800 million in tax relief in 1998. In addition, over 3.8 million needy students receive up to $3,750 in Pell Grant scholarships, an amount that is $1,450 greater than the maximum grant in 1993. Finally, since 1994, over 150,000 AmeriCorps members have earned nearly $400 million for college while serving their communities.

The Clinton-Gore Administration has also modified the student loan program in ways that have made it more efficient and affordable. Changes include introducing lower fees and interest rates that have saved the average borrower over $500; providing more flexible repayment terms, including the option to repay as a share of income; and restoration of a tax deduction for student loan interest. The new Direct Student Loan program—established in 1994—bypasses federally guaranteed lenders to deliver loans to students more quickly, simply, and cheaply. Together, students and taxpayers have already saved $15 billion through student loan reforms.

HOMESTEAD GEAR UP PROGRAM, HOMESTEAD, FL.

Homestead serves entire grade levels through local partnerships that enhance the educational opportunities for students in the Accolade and Homestead Middle Schools. The general population, while demographically diverse, is highly mobile with many migrant workers who change school districts frequently. The transient social climate is due to the extraordinary changes in commerce following Hurricane Andrew, which closed 50 percent of the local businesses and the Air Force Base. Parts of Homestead are a federal Empowerment Zone, with 68 percent of the population living below the poverty level.

The partnership, composed of the public schools, local businesses and non-profits such as ASPIRA and the Non-Violence Project, helps close educational gaps by providing extra services to these students, including an after-school academy, in-school tutoring, a summer academy, a Saturday enrichment program, counseling services, parental involvement, teacher training, staff development and a Program of Industry Supported Mentorship (PRISM).

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STRATEGIES TO INCREASE POSTSECONDARY DEGREE ATTAINMENT

Increases in the Hispanic college completion rate will depend in part on progress in other areas, from improving access to quality early childhood programs, to support for learning English, narrowing the achievement gap, and reducing the high school dropout rate. In addition to these foundational steps, there is also more that can be done to reach out and ensure that more Hispanics enroll and garner the benefits of higher education. Some Strategy Session participants felt that rather than aiming to double the rate of degree attainment by Hispanic students by 2010, the goal should be for Hispanic students to be earning Associate's and Bachelor's degrees at the same rate as their non-Hispanic peers. There is no question that as the demographics of high school and college students change, our system of higher education must adapt to serve the emerging marketplace and the increasing numbers of Hispanics.

PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

Successful efforts to prepare children for college—for the application process, admissions, and the rigor of postsecondary education—begin long before the senior year of high school and require improvements across the entire education continuum.

- Support challenging curriculum in elementary and secondary school, including access to gifted and talented and advanced placement courses;
- Focus early on college preparation and outreach by creating K-16 partnerships, such as middle school-college partnerships that raise student expectations and prepare them academically for success in higher education;
- Implement early and aggressive intervention strategies—from remediation to advanced learning. For example, many schools have found that 7th grade can be a crucial time for developing interest and discipline in future scientists and engineers;
- Continue to recruit and seek underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in colleges and universities;
- Encourage mentoring programs that match Hispanic students with community role models;
- Encourage alternative routes to college, including the military, which provides both career options and a pipeline to college;
- Inform students early of the obstacles that residency status may pose in enrolling in college and receiving aid, and develop ways to help students in these situations.

MATHEMATICS-ENGINEERING-SCIENCE-ACHIEVEMENT (MESA) PROGRAM, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES

Through the MESA Program and the Minority Engineering Program (MEP), Arizona State operates a comprehensive recruitment and retention system for historically underrepresented groups in science, mathematics and engineering. The program incorporates liaisons with middle and high school teachers, Summer Institutes, and special career days as well as scholarships. The first-year retention rate of the MESA Program participants is higher than the school-wide average for both the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the College as a whole.

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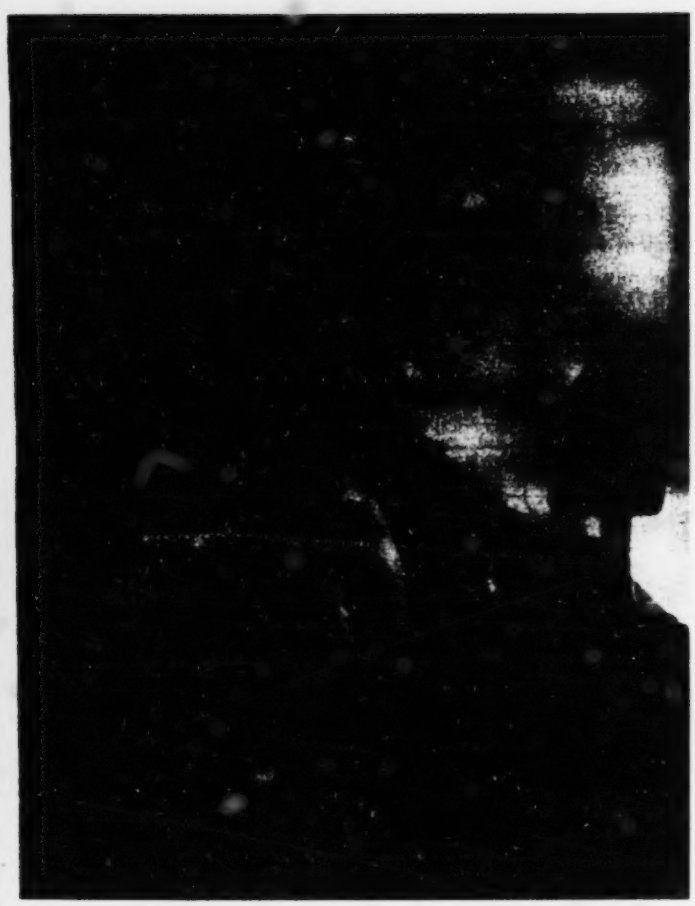

ENSURE COLLEGE RETENTION

Increasing the percent of Hispanics who attain college degrees requires more than increasing Hispanic enrollment; schools and communities must also develop strategies to help Hispanic Americans stay in college (e.g., addressing the "over-prediction" problem, helping students maintain good grades, etc.).

- Provide supports to ensure that students continue to enroll in at least one course per semester. Research indicates that, contrary to popular belief, "stop-outs" pose a considerable threat to college completion; keeping students engaged, even when they can not continue full-time, can be an important strategy;
- Extend programs like GEAR UP;
- Increase associate degree enrollment, attainment and coordination with Bachelor's programs to facilitate enrollment in four-year programs.

PROVIDE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

While college is becoming increasingly affordable, earning a degree requires more than hard work; it also requires ongoing financial support.

- Expand scholarship and grant opportunities for low-income students and Latinos through public, private and non-profit sources. Research indicates that each $1,000 increase in annual tuition costs is associated with a five-percentage point decrease in postsecondary entry;
- Inform students early of the obstacles that residency status may pose in enrolling in college and receiving aid, and develop ways to help students in these situations. Increase advanced degree attainment, including professional degrees and PhDs to increase supply of Hispanic role models and college professors.

NEXT STEPS

As part of the June 15th Strategy Session, President Clinton and Vice President Gore unveiled a series of public-private partnerships that will implement some of the suggested strategies for improving Hispanic students' education. Those partnerships are described below to help other corporations, policy makers, and educators meet the President's challenge to the nation create, implement, and assess additional programs that help us achieve the five national goals.

PUBLIC AWARENESS & OUTREACH: Several public and private sector participants initiated media campaigns to increase public awareness of the impediments to Hispanic student achievement and the resources available for overcoming the obstacles.

OVERSIGHT: THE 2010 ALLIANCE In response to the President's call to action to improve education for Hispanic students, non-profit and corporate partners formed the 2010 Alliance. This purpose of this alliance is to monitor the nation's progress towards fulfillment of the five national goals announced by the President at the strategy session. The 2010 Alliance is a newly formed collaborative partnership composed of several non-profit and philanthropic organizations. Spearheading this effort are the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), and the National Association for Latino Elected Officials (NALEO). In addition, other participant members include the Ford, Irvine, Kellogg, and Hazen foundations, as well as AT&T, Univision, State Farm Insurance, and the General Motors Corporation. Over the next decade, the 2010 Alliance will focus its efforts on reducing and/or eliminating the Hispanic educational achievement gap. The White House and the Department of Education look forward to supporting the 2010 Alliance's efforts toward this end. In October 2000, the 2010 Alliance held its inaugural meeting with its participant members in Washington, D.C. The meeting was designed to reach a consensus on the structure and long term plan for the 2010 Alliance. For further information regarding this exciting and promising new effort, please contact NCCEP, NABE, NCLR or NALEO.

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA) The American Library Association has committed to establishing a literary award for children's literature that reflects the Latino culture. The Association will work to elevate the prestige of the award to the level of the Newberry or Caldecott awards by 2010.

THE ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC ADVERTISING AGENCIES (AHAA) The Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies (AHAA) will implement the first integrated Hispanic communications campaign to close the educational achievement gap between Hispanics and the rest of the student population. Entitled "FuturaMente," the project will consist of two multimedia campaigns: one to educate the parents of 3-4 year-olds about the importance of early education, and a second to encourage high school youth to pursue a career in teaching. AHAA is a national organization of minority-owned and minority-managed advertising firms.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED) will launch an expansive outreach effort to provide more and higher quality services to very young Hispanic children through Title I pre-school programs. The Department will provide all local school districts with policy guidance on the flexibility available for using Title I funds for preschools. The guidance will encourage school districts to use Title I funds for preschool, urge schools to increase outreach to Hispanic families, and explain the flexibility in Title I schoolwide programs for selecting participants and providing services to Hispanic children and their parents.

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING: Several groups committed to providing training and resources to help organizations, educational institutions, and teachers raise the academic achievement of Hispanic students.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED) AND NATIONAL PTA The Department of Education collaborated with the National PTA to distribute "Vamos Juntos a la Escuela" (Let's Go to School Together), a videotape for Spanish-speaking families and the schools and organizations that serve them. The tape, which will go to PTAs nationwide serving schools with significant populations of Hispanic students, provides basic suggestions about helping children succeed in school, covering subjects such as parent involvement in education, early childhood, reading and mathematics, and preparing young people for college.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is working in partnership with the Hispanic community to develop and implement an initiative called SOY!! UNICA!! SOY LATINA!! !!I'M UNIQUE!! I'M LATINA!!, a national, comprehensive, multimedia bilingual campaign geared for Hispanics/Latinas aged 9 to 14. The initiative will assist young girls to build positive self-esteem in order to prevent drug use, as well as harmful consequences of emotional and behavioral problems.

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DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS, INC. DISCOVERY EN ESPANOL (DEN) will create five public service announcements (PSAs) that will be run on the channel regularly for a year beginning in January, 2001, and distributed through any other available medium. Each PSA will focus on one of the five national Hispanic Education goals announced by the President at the White House Strategy Session on June 15th. Discovery en Espanol, in partnership with cable operators across the country, will create versions of the PSAs to air in local communities. Discovery en Espanol is a digital channel owned and operated by Discovery Communications, Inc.

NATIONAL PTA AND THE HISPANIC RADIO NETWORK The 6.5 million member National PTA has partnered with the Hispanic Radio Network, with 100 affiliate stations in the United States, Puerto Rico and Latin America, to produce a series of one-minute radio programs that will highlight the positive affects of parental participation on student academic achievement, offer ideas to parents on how to promote safe, effective, community-centered schools, and identify resources targeted to Spanish-speaking parents.

PROCTOR & GAMBLE Proctor & Gamble has contributed $50,000 to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans for the collaborative development and distribution of a "an information kit for organizers" to support Latino parents' efforts to secure a quality education for their children. The information kit will be developed in both English and Spanish and will address the following topics: Parents as First Teachers, A Quality Education for All, Heading Towards College, and Making It Happen in Your Community.

REACH OUT AND READ Reach Out and Read, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing parents with information on the importance of language development and literacy during routine well-baby check-ups will initiate a major outreach campaign to migrant families.

SCHOLASTIC, INC., UNIVISION AND THE NATIONAL LATINO CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE Scholastic Inc., Univision and The National Latino Children's Institute will lead a nationally focused and locally targeted public awareness campaign entitled "Discover the Excitement of Reading" to support Latino families and caregivers in raising their young children's literacy skills and overall student achievement by nurturing and cultivating the love of reading and storytelling; making quality, affordable children's books available to Latino children; encouraging and promoting new Latino authors; and increasing the number of culturally appropriate materials available for Latino children.

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA) In addition to the literary award mentioned above, the ALA will also offer model programs for libraries on how to provide excellent service to the Hispanic community and initiate an outreach campaign to show other organizations how to create similar model programs.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS (AAM) The American Association of Museums will encourage its member museums to meet the needs of Hispanic students by providing teacher training, using technology to link to schools with high Hispanic populations, and making curriculum materials available online. AAM will also create a link on its website to provide information on this outreach campaign, publicize the site in its publications, and seek promising practices from museums to highlight on the site and in its publications.

MENTORSHIP, INTERNSHIPS & SCHOLARSHIPS: Several companies and federal agencies are implementing mentoring/internship/scholarship programs, all of which are suggested strategies for closing the achievement gap, increasing high school and college achievement (e.g. Goals 3,4, and 5).

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) The Department of Commerce recently entered into agreements with three Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) to initiate professional exchange programs between DOC executives and HSI faculty, make DOC's world-renowned scientists available to the HSIs as guest lecturers, and permit the Department to enhance its efforts to recruit HSI graduates for DOC employment. In September, DOC sponsored a mini-conference for HSI presidents, leaders of the Hispanic community, and DOC executives to promote communications among the entities' executives and facilitate the implementation of the exchange and recruiting programs.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) On September 21-22, 2000, the Department of Commerce sponsored the "Directions 2000 Conference" for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) to promote minority participation in DOC grants and other financial assistance programs. Over 190 Minority Serving Institutions of higher learning, including a substantial number of HSIs, were invited to participate in the conference.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED) ED, in partnership with the National Association of Bilingual Education, will launch a series of workshops for school districts on strategies for training teachers to address linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom, effective bilingual education programs, teaching reading to English language learners, and using community-wide resources

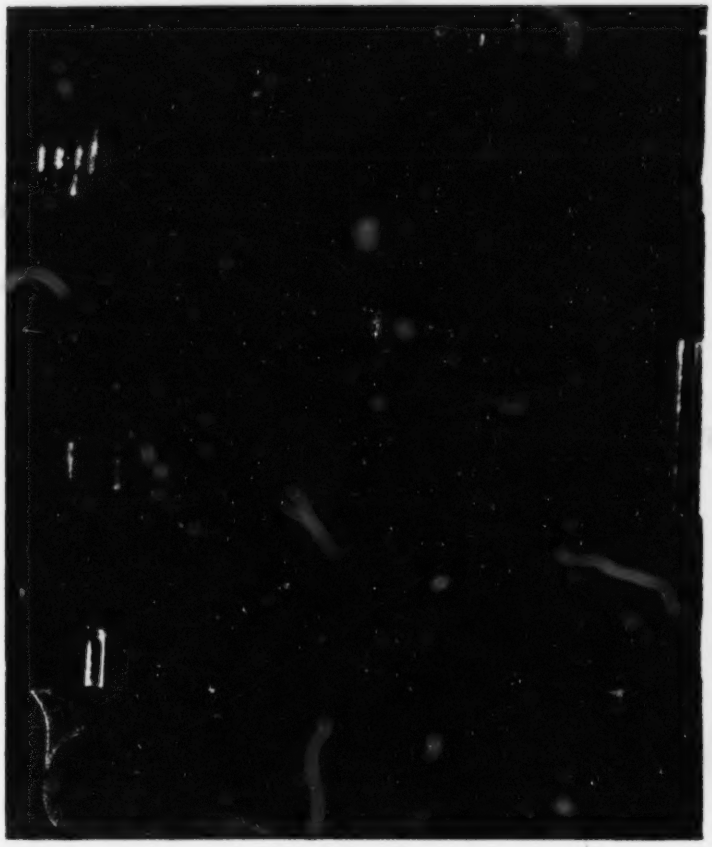
to meet the needs of new students and their families. The Department will also provide technical assistance for school superintendents and principals, who work in communities that have recently experienced a large increase in Hispanic students, on building partnerships to improve academic performance and increase high school completion rates.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED) ED's Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) Program will provide $25.8 million for 76 new development grants to enable eligible HSIs to expand their capacity to serve Hispanic students and other low-income individuals. The HSIs may use the funds for faculty development, administrative management, and improvement of academic programs, facilities and student services. HSIs enroll the majority of all Hispanic students nationally and also provide access for a large number of other disadvantaged students.

THE DEPARTMENTOF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, (HHS) THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, (HUD) AND THE WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Health and Human Services and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans are working together to provide English and Spanish language materials and educational forums to parents of young children through HUD's Neighborhood Networks and other community-based programs. The parents will receive information on early brain development research, parenting tips, how to access childcare subsidies and tax credits, how to choose a child care center, what Head Start has to offer, and other family supports. The initiative was launched in July 2000, in the first of six pilot HUD centers across the country serving Latino communities.

LIGHTSPAN, INC. AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) Lightspan and HUD teamed up to provide educational technology resources to HUD's over 600 Neighborhood Networks centers in public and assisted housing communities across the country. Additionally, Lightspan will provide assistance and customized on-line content to meet the unique needs of the residents in 10 pilot Neighborhood Network centers that serve Hispanic communities. Governor Thomas R. Carper of Delaware has taken the lead in facilitating this dynamic partnership in two of Delaware's HUD Neighborhood Network centers.

THE HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HACU) CORPORATE INTERNSHIPS HACU



has partnered with the St. Paul Companies, State Farm Insurance Companies, and the Target Corporation, to initiate a corporate internship program for Hispanic college students throughout the Unites States, modeled after its successful federal government internship program which places over 500 college interns annually.

WASHINGTON MUTUAL, INC. Washington Mutual Inc. has committed to expand its high school internship program from 6 to 8 states. This program provides 11th and 12th grade students with a two-year internship opportunity consisting of part-time employment in the bank's financial centers and 80 hours of instruction in workforce preparation and consumer education (e.g. interview techniques, dress code, team work, work place ethics, time management, cultural diversity, conflict resolution, money management). Over the past 26 years, the program has served over 37,000 high school students, including 11,000 Hispanic students.

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. Sears, Roebuck and Co. will implement a pilot internship/mentoring program in Miami and Los Angeles. The "Sears Future Leaders" program will target Hispanic high school juniors and seniors who have demonstrated strong academic performance and leadership potential. Participating students will be guaranteed part-time jobs at Sears

during holidays and summer breaks for as long as they maintain a "C" average in school. They also will be matched up with manager-level volunteer mentors, who will guide the students in learning business literacy and professional conduct. Sears will offer tuition reimbursement for college to interns who meet policy guidelines.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) In 2001, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will establish a scholarship program to increase the number of students entering and graduating from 2- and 4-year Hispanic Serving Institutions and encourage students to pursue careers in the U.S. Food and Agriculture sector. The scholarship will cover educational expenses for students earning degrees ranging from an Associate of Arts through a doctorate. Following graduation, the scholarship recipients must work at USDA for one year for each year of financial assistance received. The program, which will be called the National Hispanic Serving Institutions Scholars Program, will serve up to 30 students during its first year of funding.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) The Department of Defense will expand its student teaching internship program to increase the number of Hispanic educators in overseas schools, which serve family members of military personnel. The Department has entered into five new partnerships with Hispanic Serving Institutions and will provide round-trip travel expenses to entice exceptional students who are majoring in education at those colleges and universities to complete their student teaching internships in ED schools overseas.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) For FY 2001, the Department of Energy's Community College Institute (CCI) has committed to quadruple the size of its summer "technical and research" internship program for community college students studying mathematics, science, or other technical subjects. The Department will enhance its internship program by providing additional incentives for interns who agree to mentor other students when they return to their community college after their internships, including reimbursements for textbooks and membership fees and travel expenses to meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

RESOURCES

The following are some resources to help inform and support stakeholder efforts to undertake strategies to close the achievement gap.

COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS' REPORT The President's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) will release a report entitled, "Educational Attainment and Success in the New Economy: An Analysis of Challenges for Improving Hispanic Students' Achievement." The report documents the gaps in educational outcomes for Hispanics and the importance from both an individual and national perspective of improving Hispanic students' educational achievement. In addition, the CEA's report focuses on the need for greater representation of Hispanics in the rapidly growing information technology sector. [http://www.whitehouse.gov/media/pdf/Education_Final.pdf]
The following publications are available from the U.S. Department of Education by calling 1-877-4ED-PUBS:

KEY INDICATORS OF HISPANIC STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: NATIONAL GOALS AND BENCHMARKS FOR THE NEXT DECADE This publication provides national goals to guide federal, state, and local educators, policy makers, and community leaders in improving educational access and quality for Hispanic students. It also provides indicators of progress in the following areas for schools, communities and states to follow: early childhood education, learning English, closing achievement gaps and the dropout rate, and increasing college completion.

HELPING HISPANIC STUDENTS REACH HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS: AN IDEA BOOK This publication highlights promising strategies used by schools and communities to help Hispanic students succeed in learning, gaining productive employment, and becoming responsible citizens. The "Idea Book" was developed by the U.S. Department of Education as a guide to support schools and communities in designing successful programs that promote high academic achievement among Hispanic students, including using federal funds. The Department will send the Idea Book to the top 100 school districts with the fastest growing Hispanic student populations.

*READ*WRITE*NOW! ACTIVITY SERIES* (available in Spanish) Materials are available to help children build their reading skills outside of school, especially during the summer months.

IMPROVING MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT: WHAT PARENTS AND FAMILIES CAN DO (available in Spanish) This guide answers questions and outlines resources to help families, educators and other community members improve mathematics achievement.

FIGURE THIS! (Available in Spanish) This series of engaging math challenges provides parent-friendly learning activities for families to do together, using middle-school level math in everyday situations.

HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN MATH (available in Spanish) This booklet helps families reinforce their elementary school children's math skills and understanding by transforming everyday tasks into enjoyable math activities.

CHARTING A COURSE FOR COLLEGE (available in Spanish) This guide provides financial aid information for students and their parents.

THINK COLLEGE! ME? NOW? This publication outlines ways that students and their families can prepare academically and financially for college early in the middle grades.

GETTING READY FOR COLLEGE EARLY (available in Spanish) This guidebook will help parents and their children understand the steps to take during the middle school and junior high school years to get ready for college.

FUNDING YOUR EDUCATION (available in Spanish) This publication provides general information about the U.S. Department of Education's federal student financial aid programs. It is designed for high school students and others considering entering a postsecondary school for the first time.

QUESTIONS PARENTS ASK ABOUT SCHOOLS (available in Spanish) This easy-to-read question and answer booklet discusses teachers' expectations and student workload at each grade level, how parents can help their children succeed in the classroom, safety issues in schools, steps for college preparation, and much more.

LEARNING PARTNERS: A GUIDE FOR FAMILY ACTIVITIES (available in Spanish) This publication offers activities that parents can use to promote their child's learning in various subjects such as art, history and science.

HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH HOMEWORK (available in Spanish) This publication can help answer questions that parents and others who care for children in elementary and junior high school often ask about homework.

CHALLENGE YOUNG MINDS: 50 WAYS TO BETTER EDUCATION (available in Spanish) This brochure provides ideas on simple ways parents, grandparents, teachers, school administrators and principals, businesses, and companies can do to help improve the education of children.

SPANISH LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS: A MINI CATALOG OF FREE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS (available in Spanish)

LATINOS IN EDUCATION This publication provides a snapshot of information about Latinos in our nation's education system from early childhood through graduate education.

WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO YOUTH This publication presents a compendium of programs that work for Latino youth. This directory offers contact information and program descriptions to facilitate networking and information sharing. It is intended to be a tool for foundations, businesses, policymakers, community-based organizations, schools, universities, and other interested individuals and communities actively engaged in addressing the strengths and needs of Latino youth.

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